

## Message Text

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67

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 IO-13

COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 SSO-00 /092 W

----- 104583

R 021355Z AUG 76

FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8163

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN

UNCLAS JERUSALEM 1003

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, ECON, IS, JO

SUBJECT: WEST BANK STRIKES IN PROTEST OF IMPOSITION OF  
EQUALIZATION TAX (VAT)

REF: JERUSALEM 890

1. COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY IN MAJOR WEST BANK CITIES CEASED  
AUG 1 AND 2 AS STRIKES WERE STAGED TO PROTEST THE IMPOSI-  
TION OF THE "EQUALIZATION TAX" IN THE WEST BANK. IN GENERAL,  
SHOPS, CAFES AND RESTAURANTS SHUT, BUT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES  
CONTINUED. IN TULKARM AND HILQILYA, THE MUNICIPALITIES ALSO  
STRUCK OFFICIALLY, AND IN NABLUS, CONDUCT OF CITY BUSINESS ALSO  
REPORTEDLY STOPPED. ACCORDING TO ARABIC PRESS, SEVERAL  
PERSONS HAVE BEEN ARRESTED IN JENIN, AND A NABLUS JOURNALIST  
TOLD THE CONGEN THAT SEVERAL PERSONS HAVE BEEN INJURED IN  
CLASHES THERE. NO STRIKE WAS EVIDENT IN EAST JERUSALEM WHERE THE  
COMPARABLE VALUE ADDED TAX (VAT) HAS BEEN IN EFFECT SINCE  
JULY 1. WEST BANK STRIKES ARE EXPECTED TO LAST THROUGH  
AUG. 3.

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2. BETHLEHEM'S MAYOR AND HEAD OF CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, ELIAS FREIJ, ACTING AS THE WB SPOKESMAN, HAS REQUESTED A MEETING WITH ISRAELI DEFMIN PERES TO DISCUSS THE TAX. MEANWHILE, ISRAELI RADIO REPORTS THAT SOME STAMP TAXES WHICH WERE LEVIED ON WEST BANKERS IN JUNE HAVE BEEN RESCINDED.

3. IN SEPARATE INCIDENT JULY 30, TWO TEENAGE BOYS WERE SHOT IN NABLUS BY ISRAELI BORDER POLICE PATROLMEN. A LOCAL JOURNALIST SAID ONE BOY WAS HIT IN ARM, THE SECOND IN CHEST, BUT CONDITION OF BOTH IS IMPROVING. JERUSALEM POST REPORTED THAT ISRAELIS OPENED FIRE AFTER A BOTTLE WHICH THEY THOUGHT WAS A MOLOTOV COCKTAIL WAS THROWN. ISRAELI RADIO ALSO REPORTED SIX YOUTHS ARRESTED IN NABLUS AUG 1 FOR THROWING STONES AND BOTTLES AT SECURITY VEHICLES.

4. COMMENT: IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT THE WEST BANK STRIKE WILL BE ANY MORE SUCCESSFUL IN CHANGING ISRAELI POLICY THAN A SIMILAR STRIKE IN JULY BY EAST JERUSALEM MERCHANTS.RESTAURANT, TELEPHONE, CLEANING AND SIMILAR SERVICE BILLS IN EAST JERUSALEM NOW COME WITH 8 PER CENT VAT CHARGE ADDED.  
NEWLIN

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## Message Attributes

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